

MEMOIRS

OF

LITERATURE.

MONDAY, March 13, 1710.

To be continued Weekly.

THE Reception so many flying Papers have met with from the Publick, is an Effect of that Inquisitive Genius peculiar to the British Nation. The Indulgence of the Press to a decent Freedom of Enquiry, must naturally encourage some to gratify the Curiosity, and improve the Taste of the People. Hence we see Morals, Wit and Politicks retail'd, the Passions are reform'd, the Imagination and Judgment refin'd, and just Notions of the Liberties of Mankind establish'd. These Advantages have hitherto been furnish'd only from the Product of this Country; but the Demands of the Publick call for Additional Supplies. We have therefore, with great Difficulty and Expence, settled a Correspondence with the Commonwealth of Learning abroad, and undertaken to import the Growth of Foreign Parts. We shall plead then the Privilege of a late Act, to Naturalize the most Curious Pieces of Eloquence, Dissertations, Essays, Critical Remarks, &c. and take Notice of such Books as would otherwise escape the Observation of the Studious. In a word, The Reader may expect to find a very Early Account of whatever the Learned World shall be pleas'd to Communicate relating to Arts and Sciences.

An Account of a Funeral-Oration pronounc'd at the Obsequies of the late Prince of Conty, in the Church of St. Andrew des Arcs, by Father Massillon, Priest of the Oratory.

FATHER Massillon chose for his Text these Words of the Book of Wisdom, Chap. 8. *I shall be Illustrious among the Multitude, and honour'd by the Elders, tho' I be young. Princes and mighty Men shall admire the Extent of my Knowledge, and the Penetration of my Judgment; and, I shall be Immortal.* You have admir'd him, says he, speaking of the Great Prince on whom he bestows this Panegyrick, *You have admir'd him, as one of the greatest Men of the Age, for his Skill in War, Habebo claritatem ad turbas, I shall be Illustrious among the Multitude: As one endow'd with all the Accomplishments of a Civil Life, Et honorem apud seniores juvenis, I shall be honour'd by the Elders, though I be young: As one of a most Consummate Wisdom, Et acutus inveniar in judicio: I shall be admired for the extent of my Knowledge, as a Hero, as a Wise Man, as one of a Superior and Universal Genius.*

Having thus divided the Text, he begins the first Part with this Reflexion. ' Valour, says he, in Princes of the Blood of our Kings, is rather the Prerogative of their Birth, than the Pretension of their Merit. Their Courage and Intrepidity, like Crowns and Scepters, are Hereditary. Since then the Advantage of a Royal Birth gives them no Title to our Praise, their Valour cannot challenge our Applause'. The Eloquent Orator does not therefore undertake to set off the Prince's Valour, but the mighty Genius he discover'd in his early Years for War. ' Prompted by his own Genius, he soon made War his Study, not his Amusement: And he wanted no Quality necessary to compleat the Hero. He had Capacity, Elevation, Presence of Mind, Vivacity, profound Judgment, Contrivance, and Universal Knowledge. He thought a General had little Reason to value himself upon the Success of a Battel, unless he proved himself worthy of the Command. To the Study of the Ancients, particularly of Cæsar's Commentaries, he added the Conversation of Men the most experienced in the Science of War. He heard them, he studied

them, he made them his Friends, the better to make them his Masters: All their different Talents he united in his own Person; convinced that though a Noble Birth infuses Generous Dispositions, 'tis Application forms exalted Souls.

France at that time enjoy'd a Peace, which our Victories and the King's Moderation had lately given to the greatest Part of Europe. Hungary was still the Theatre of War. The Turks, proud of their former Conquests, threatened the Faith of Christendom. The Prince's Brother speeds to the Fields of Fame, and he himself pursues; Fraternal Inclination calls, and Glory leads the Way.

The Orator describing the Progress of his Hero in the Art of War, represents him first of all in strict Confederacy with Prince Charles of Lorrain. He accompanies him back to Chantilly, where he portrays him receiving Instructions from the renowned Conde. He follows the Prince through all his Campaigns, to Steinkerk, to Norwinde; and concludes with a Reflexion which infinitely heightens the Glory of the Prince of Conty. 'Did ever any Man before, supported, in a manner, by no other Advantages than the Expectation he had rais'd of himself, attain to that high Degree of Reputation in War, which the Conde's and the Turenne's, after a long Series of Victories and Commands, at last obtain'd? Did ever any Man under such Circumstances, so securely gain the Confidence of the Troops, the Devotion of the Officers, the Love of the People, the Favour of the Court, the Respect of Princes, who seem'd to forget their Rank, out of REGARD to his Merit, the Admiration of the greatest Captains of the Age, in a Word, the Esteem of our Enemies, and the Applause of all Europe? How great was the Superiority of his Merit, that could force the World to give in earnest to their dawning Hopes, such undisguis'd united Praises, as seldom do attend the greatest Actions?

Great Men, who owe their Title to some Signal Events, have sometimes nothing Great but Pomp and Show. Upon these Extraordinary Occasions the Glory of the Success dazzles the Eyes of the Publick, and lends the Soul a seeming Vigor and surprizing Grandeur. Pride assumes the Pretensions of Virtue; the Man surpasses himself; he is elated above his real Level.

How many Conquerors renown'd in Story, at the head of an Army, or on a Day of Battel, seem'd to outshine the List of Hero's? Yet in the Duties of a social Life they scarce could pass for Men.

Nor is it strange; for in these Incidents of Fortune, Man acts as on a Stage, and Personates a different Character. But in the usual Course of Life, he reassumes himself; he lays aside the Mask, and stands the Man confess.

Wherefore when the Sacred Writer praises those Illustrious Men, * endowed with Virtue, who acquired an Immortal Glory among the People,

he comprehends all in two Words: By the Gracefulness of moral Virtues they maintain'd the Order and Beauty of Society abroad, Pulchritudinis studium habentes; and were like peaceful Tutelary Genii at Home, pacificantes in dominibus suis.

I confess, Gentlemen, that the Prince of Conty in being a great Warrior, shares a Glory in common with the many Hero's France has produc'd in all Ages.

But this is peculiar to his Praise, that whilst some even of a shining Figure have shipwreck'd their Honour in the private Transactions of Life; he has in all Circumstances display'd the most Estimable Virtues: The more we beheld him, with the more Advantage he always appear'd.

We saw him a Loyal Subject, a disinterested Friend, sincere, affable, prudent, modest, with all the Benevolence of an unreserved Humanity, and always uniform and constant to himself.

How profound was his Veneration, how ardent his Devotion to the King? How oft have we heard him deplore the Misfortune of those Princes, who prostituted their Birth to their Ambition? Who instead of exhorting Subjects to pay Allegiance to their Sovereign, inspir'd the People with Contemptuous Nations of the Respect due to Royal Majesty: Far from being the Cement to unite Prince and Subjects, they proved a Partition-Wall to divide them: Who stirr'd up their Native Country to Arms, by that awful Name which has protected it for so many Ages; and were the Chief Men of the State, only to be Chieftains of Rebels?

The Prince of Conty often observ'd, That Princes by their Birth have a nearer Access to the Throne, only to be the more inseparably united to the Sovereign; That it is more Glory to yield Obedience to the Blood from whence they sprang, than to Reign over Foreign Realms; That Disloyalty in Inferior Subjects is a Crime against the State, but in Princes 'tis an Outrageous Attempt upon their own Character; That Princes were Born for the Good of their Country; That the State being the Inheritance of their Ancestors, 'tis their Duty to maintain its Tranquility like that of their own Families; and since the Beams of Glory that surround the Throne are first darted upon them, they ought to stoop with Reverence, and shew the World the brightest Examples of Submission.

The Orator continues his Description of the Moral Virtues of the Prince, and then proceeds to represent in a proper Light the Endowments of his Mind, with respect to Wit and Learning.

Learning, says he, and Knowledge in a Prince, oft prove the dangerous Rock on which his Glory or Religion suffers Wreck; They generally engage Him in empty insignificant Enquiries, entirely foreign to the Duties of his high Rank; They improve the Man, but not inform the Prince; They swell him with a Tumor of Conceit, and oft enlighten his Reason at the same time that they extinguish

guish his Faith. But the refined Endowments of the Prince of *Conty*, are heighten'd by the other Advantages mentioned in my Text.

His spreading Fame attracts, not the Desires of a Foreign Queen, but the Vows of a whole Kingdom. The Nobles and the Senators of *Poland*, struck with the Wonders they had heard, with Emulation strive to make the Present of their Crown, which ever was the Prize of Valour and true Merit: *In conspectu Potentium admirabilis ero.*

This first Fruit of his Knowledge was only a Pledge of an Immortal Crown, secur'd by his Return to God before he Dy'd: *Et habebbo immortalitatem.*

But how vast, Gentlemen, was the Extent of his comprehensive Understanding! One would have thought he had made Profession of War, the *Belles Lettres*, History, Politicks, Natural Philosophy, Civil Law, and even Theology. He seem'd to have applyed himself to each of these Sciences, according to the different Capacities of those he Convers'd with. When they heard him, they would break out into Admiration in those Words, formerly applied to the wisest King of the East. *How does thy Youth abound with Knowledge and Learning! Wisdom and Science flow from thy Mouth, like the Waters of a Majestick Stream! Thy penetrating Genius fathoms the Mysterics of Nature! Thou art the Darling of thy People in Peace, their Wonder and Defence in War!* *Quemadmodum eruditus es in juventute tua, & impletus es quasi fluvius sapientia! Et terram rexit Anima tua!* ---- *Et dilectus es in pace tua.*

His Reading was Universal. 'Tis true, he had no Relish for those Visionary empty Books, the general Amusement of Idle Hours, which only corrupt the Heart, and not improve the Mind: But he reverenc'd the Sacred Oracles, and had a profound Respect for the Mysteries of our Faith.

Even at the time, indulgent Heaven! when he knew not yet how amiable Thou art, he acknowledg'd Thee to be the Holy and True One! His Reason did not invade the Boundaries of Faith, tho' he forgot the Duties it prescribes! His Mouth paid Homage to the Truth of thy Mysteries, even when his Heart still wander'd from Thee!

In an Age, (I speak it with Horror,) in an Age, when Religion is become the Sport of Libertines, or of the Learned falsely so call'd; in an Age, when Impiety is the distinguishing Character of a Wit; in an Age, when the Belief of a Deity passes for a Reflexion upon our Courage or Understanding; in an Age, when so many Sciolists blaspheme they know not what; think they are knowing in Proportion to their Temerity; learn to doubt of Religion before they are acquainted with it, and set up for Teachers of Impiety, before they have been the Disciples of Faith: Amidst these Crying Abuses, the Faith of the Prince of *Conty*, so superior in Knowledge, reverences the Truth of Religion. This great Genius stoops as an humble Votary before the Majesty of him who weighs the Spirits in a Balance, and

looks upon those who pry into his Secrets, as tho' they were not *. His Curiosity goes no farther, than to convince him that Reason has its Bounds; That we can know no more of the Ways of God, than what he is pleased to reveal; That Faith is the Center, in which the Beams of Knowledge must unite; That they, who throw off the Yoke, find themselves plung'd in the same Uncertainties; That the Doctrine of Libertines is not more intelligible, than the Mysteries of Religion; and, That the Infidel loses the Advantages of Faith, without any Improvement to his Reason. Such wete the fix'd Sentiments of that Great Prince.

Attended now with all this Numerous Pomp of Virtues, Cou'd any thing be wanting, but a Crown? Howe're, the Prince of *Conty*, contented with the Rank he held by his Birth, never desir'd one. The Glory of being so near of Blood to the Greatest Monarch in the World; the Zeal, whereby he was still more united to him; the Pleasure of being in the Presence, and Obeying his Orders, were the utmost Limits of his Ambition: And, like that Queen recorded in Scripture, who thought the Condition of *Solomon's* Servants preferable to a Crown; He esteem'd it a Greater Glory to be a Subject of *LEWIS*, than to be King of a Foreign Nation. *Beati Servi tui, qui stant coram te semper.* †

But at last *Poland* envies *France* the Honour of Possessing so Great a Prince. Their Throne, vacant by the Death of a King, who had been the Terror of Infidels, demands a Prince of the Blood of our Kings. There is no need of Intrigue; the great Reputation of the Prince of *Conty* immediately procures him the Unanimous Voice of the Kingdom.

How could a Warlike Nation well Subsist without a Prince by Nature form'd for Arms? A Nation Independent, Free, without a Prince distinguish'd by his Wisdom and Moderation? A Nation zealous for Religion, without a Prince both Learned and Devout? A Nation, that chuse their own Kings, without a Prince, by their Universal Love invited to the Throne? In a Word, A Nation continually inflam'd with Civil Broils, without a Prince, whose bright Transcendent Genius could master all the Springs of Human Passions, could wind and reconcile their jarring Interests, and make them center in the Publick Weal? Happy! thrice Happy People! if Heaven, who deals out Kings and Kingdoms as he pleases, had not been Deaf, in Anger, to your Prayers; or rather, if you your selves had not conspir'd against your Happiness! How would your Days run smoothly on when crown'd with Plenty, Peace, and Glory! Your Laws had been the Bulwark and the Barrier of the State. Nothing but Sacrifices of Joy, and Incense of Praise, had adorn'd your Altars. The Calamities of preceding Reigns woud lye buried in Oblivion.

Your new Conquests wou'd soon out-balance
your former Losses ; and your Valour would
be only formidable to your Neighbours !
But a new Faction rears its Head, adverse
to Liberty, Religion, and the Laws. Seditious
Votes subvert a due Election : The most
Sacred Rights are violated, and Virtue yields
to Force. Sordid Bribery prevails over the
Honour of the Nation, the Happiness of their
Country, and even the Interests of Religion.
* * * The Tribes are divided ; a Stranger as-
cends the Throne, and * * * introduces a
Prophane Worship into the Heritage of the
Lord. The King, whom God had chosen, is
Abdicated : Providence in meet Indignation,
exposes him to the View of *Poland*. In the
Person of the Prince, he withdraws from them
his Protection and his Mercy ; and that Mis-
fortune, which removes him from a Country
so ingrate, was the Source as well as the Sign
of all their approaching Disasters.

What a dreadful Scene of Desolation and
Horror does that Nation lay open to the Eyes
of all *Europe* ? Discord and Rage inflame the
Civil War. * * * The Throne is turn'd upside
down. Her Crown becomes the sport of
neighbouring States and Kings ; her Cities are
plunder'd by her Allies, as well as by her Foes.
† *She gives her hands to the Assyrians* ; a People
whom she always look'd upon as her Vassals,
now Lord it over her. Her Altars are demo-
lished : Her Priests dragg'd from the Sanctuary,
are led in Triumph to Captivity. Her Vir-
gins are deflow'r'd : Her Princes, like timorous
Sheep, flee spiritless, dissolv'd before their fierce
Pursuers. Her Fields are fruitful of nothing
but Blood. The raging Sword abroad, and
Death in all its Terrors despotic reigns at
Home. Heaven, who visits them in wrath,
will not suspend his Judgments. With one

Hand he pours out the Vials of his Indignation,
and with the other waves the Sword of
War. All the Scourges of his Vengeance
fall down at once on that ill-fated Land. Her
Paths present a dismal Solitude. And though
o'rewhelm'd with such Calamities, nothing
can calm the Rage of her Inhabitants. The
Hand which strikes them, which confounds
'em, does not disarm them. They execute
the Sentence of Divine Justice upon them-
selves. Even the publick Ruin can't put a
stop to Party-Feud and Animosity ; but raving
with excess of Woe, they embrue their Hands
in one another's Blood.

O Thou tremendous Being ! dost thou strike
to destroy and not to mend ? Wilt thou re-
member *Abraham* and *Jacob* no more ? Wilt
thou not at last forget the Sins of the Children
for the sake of their Fathers ? The *Hedwiges*,
and *Casmirs*, a numerous Line of Kings, who
wore that Crown to vindicate the Glory of
thy Name, cannot they move thy Majesty at
length to lay the Sword of Vengeance by ?
Hast thou for ever fixt before thy Face a Cloud
of Indignation, to stop the Cries and Groans
of thy inconsolable Church from piercing to
thy Throne † ? Cannot her Calamities affect
thee so much as her Crimes ?

Reflect, unhappy People, consider how
many Evils the Lord has brought upon you !
You have rejected his King, his Anointed.
You have removed him whom you had call'd,
and now the Lord has rejected you. Your
Kings have prov'd at the same time both your
Punishment and your Crime.

The Orator accompanies his Hero to his last
Hours, and concludes his Panegyrick with a
lively Description of those Graces that adorn'd
his Death.

† Lam. 5. 6.

† Lam. 5. 4.

ROME.

Father Bonanni has sent to the Press a Large Description
of the Cabinet of Curiosities belonging to the Roman
College of the Jesuits. The famous Kircher began to
make that Collection, but it has been very much enlarged
since. This Description will be Adorn'd with 180 Figures ;
and contain an Exact Explication of divers Mon-
uments of Antiquity, such as Idols, Consecrated Pi-
ctures, Lamps, Medals, Statues, &c. Besides a General
History of Shells. With an Account of many Curiosi-
ties of Nature, and Microscopical Observations.

M. de' Ficoroni has publish'd several Remarks upon the
Diarium Italicum of Father Bernard de Montfaucon ; to
which he has added an Account of many Antiquities lately
found in the Ruins of Ancient Rome.

Osservazioni di Francesco de' Ficoroni, sopra le Antichità di Roma, descritte nel Diario Italico dal M. Rev. Padre Bernardo de Montfaucon, in fine delle quali s'aggiungono molte cose anti- che, scoperte ultimamente tra le rovine dell' Antichità di Roma. In Roma nella Stamperia d' Antonio de' Rossi. 1709. 4to.

MODENA.

THE Learned Abbot Don Benedict Bacchini, has put out
at last the Ancient Historian of the Church of Ra-
venna, known by the Name of *Agnellus*.

*Agnelli, qui & Andreae Abbatis Sancte Maria ad Blacher-
nas & Sancti Bartholomei Ravennatis, Liber Pontificalis, sive
Pontificum Ravennatum vite. Dom. Benedictus Bacchinius,
&c. ex Bibliotheca Eftensis eruit, Dissertationibus & Observati-
onibus, nec non appendice monumentorum illustravit & auxit,
&c. Mutinae in 4to.*

M. Maratori, Library-Keeper to our Duke, has imparted
to the Publick several Greek Pieces, never before pub-
lish'd.

*Anecdota Græca, que ex MSS. codicibus nunc primum eruit,
Latius donat, notis & disquisitionibus aget Ludovicus Antonius
Maratorius, &c. in 4to.*

AMSTERDAM.

R. Abelais is to be Reprinted in this City, with Notes,
much larger than the Text, written by M. du Châr,
heretofore Counsellor in the Parliament of Metz, who lives
now at Berlin.

M. le Clerc designs to publish a new Edition of *Orosius*.
The Second Edition of his Commentary upon the *Penta-
teuch*, will not come out before the end of next Summer,
'Tis said that a Book of M. Leibnitz, entitled, *Essays
concerning the Goodness of God, Free-Will, and the Origin of
Evil*, is to be Printed here.

LONDON : Printed by J. Roberts : And Sold by A. Baldwin, near the
Oxford-Arms in Warwick-Lane. (Price 2 d.)